



Wild turkeys are an important component of Michigan's natural resources. As such, they are managed in an attempt to maintain social and ecological carrying capacities through the annual spring and fall hunting seasons.

Winter counts take advantage of the tendency for wild turkeys to form stable flocks and experience restricted movement during periods of heavy snowfall. Many flocks congregate around food sources ranging from supplemental feed sites to agricultural fields. In those areas where turkeys do not readily congregate into major winter flocks, additional methods have been used to determine county population sizes. These methods utilize statistical evaluation of harvest and life history along with visual observations.

Michigan's biologists rely upon a network of interested individuals reporting the locations of turkey flocks. A statement in the Wild Turkey Hunting Guide and press release inform the public that biologists are requesting this information. Individuals may contact the Wildlife Division or report their observation on a web page dedicated to recording wild turkey sightings. Submittal of information is voluntary and remains confidential. At the end of January, biologists compile these reports and are able to estimate a minimum number of turkeys in their area.

